

11 October 1951

DEVELOPMENT OF THE "QG" -- "ROMER" ["ROMER"] CASE

1. From the earlier days of [redacted] code-value recovery (1947), it was known that several Washington to Moscow messages of 29-31 March 1945 began with the stereotype:

To the 8th Section. Materials "QG".

The Eighth Section was known to receive political intelligence, and the scanty recoveries from the interior of the messages confirmed that the contents concerned foreign policy and involved Sir Archibald Clark Kerr.

In December 1948, further work by [redacted] revealed that the contents were telegrams from Churchill, and in January 1949 the originals were identified in London.

It was thought that "QG" was probably an arbitrary code designation. When names are abbreviated to their initials, in the traffic as far as it was then known the letter is followed by a period (inside the quotation marks, when there are quotation marks). Thus there was no reason to connect "QG" with a person's name or cover name.

2. Separately, in the New York to Moscow traffic, a short message of 5 September 1944 was partly worked out (probably in 1947 and 1948) readings:

To Victor (VICTOR). According to advice from Romer (ROMER), Captain and Boer (?) will meet about 9 September in Quebec to discuss questions connected [4 groups missing]. A detailed exposition of Romer's resume is following.

70 [1 groups missing]

Captain is Roosevelt and Boer (?) is Churchill. There was nothing in the message to suggest a connection with the Washington material of the following year.

The resume mentioned was transmitted 7 September 1944, but the opening (which contained the name "Romer") was not solved until much later (probably 1951). The resume concerned chiefly occupation policies, mentioning both American and British plans.

Just before  
1 May '51

415

3. A New York to Moscow message of 28 June 1944 had been fragmentarily recovered. It revealed that Sergius (SERGEY) (Vladimir Pravdin) had met a GOMER (not GOMER = Homer). The contents were totally unknown until recently and are now known only in fragments. It was impossible until actual identification had been made to be sure that GOMER was the same as GOMER, as is now believed.

4. The link between material "G" and New York to Moscow messages was forged in the following manner: There is in the New York to Moscow traffic a six-part message of 2 and 3 August 1944. The "matching" messages (the ones enciphered with the same two-time additive key) were all in the difficult "Green" [REDACTED] code, and only the most trifling fragments had been recovered. #107-1110

In August 1950, Mrs. Gray of AFSA recovered two stretches which read "work including the personal telegraphic correspondence of Boar [? Churchill] with Captain [Roosevelt]" and "weeks ago G. was entrusted with deciphering a confidential telegram of Boar's [?] to Captain". These recoveries were communicated to the British 11 August 1950, who thereupon set up work-sheets for further recovery work. The suspicion that "G." was the source of material "G" occurred to people at AFSA immediately upon seeing Mrs. Gray's work, and this suspicion was suggested to the British at the same time.

Subsequent work on this message brought forth the suggestion that G. was married. #107-1110

5. On 30 March 1951, [REDACTED] transmitted to England the suggestion that G. was Homer (GOMER) and GOMER. (This suggestion may have been the by-product of the compilation by him of an index of cover names.) This identification, if true, allowed the placing of G. in New York in June 1944.

6. On 7 June 1951, the press reported the disappearance of Donald Stuart MacLean and Guy Francis de Morny Burgess. On 26 June 1951, the Federal Bureau of Investigation reported to AFSA that Homer (GOMER), GOMER, and "G" were believed to be identical with Donald Stuart MacLean.